A GUIDE TO PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS

Cecilia Navarrete, Ph.D.
Cyndee Gustke, M.A.

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Overview

This certainly is the golden age of assessment. Unlike any other time in the nation's history, student assessment is viewed as the pivotal piece around which the reform and improvement of the nations schools turns. - E. Roeber (1995, p.1)

Like other educational shifts in the 90s, student assessment is undergoing a profound transformation. Never before have assessments been in demand to serve such a wide range of evaluation purposes. Some of these purposes are to:

- Assess the achievement of ALL children's attainment of high standards;
- Support teaching and learning;
- Provide process and product information that is useful to students, and parents;
- Serve in placement, entry, and certification processes; and
- Act as an accountability device for reporting to the public.

In addition, the public is much more aware of the impact of assessment on the selection and implementation of curriculum and instruction, student motivation and access to learning, teachers' attitudes toward their students, and on the structure of school accountability systems.

This wave of change in student assessment has occurred as a result of open and often passionate criticisms of traditional standardized tests (Figueroa & Garcia, 1994; Gifford & O' Conner, 1992; Neill, Bursh, Schaeffer, Thail, Yohe, Zappardino, 1995; and Nettles & Nettles, 1995). The dissatisfaction primarily stems from the purpose of traditional norm-referenced achievement tests which has been to sort and rank-order students from the highest to the lowest in achievement. Based on information revealed about students from this information, schools are identified as effective or ineffective in their ability to help students succeed academically. Traditional academic achievement tests also are criticized as having no link to instruction by virtue of the fact that they are designed to cover a very narrow range of meaningful information. Moreover, a major shortcoming of traditional academic achievement tests reportedly has been their inability to predict how well students perform in relation to "real-life situations (Popham, 1994; Stiggins, 1994).

Equally as disconcerting, traditional academic achievement test developers and users continue to be rebuked by some education researchers of language minority students for ignoring the lack of reliability and validity of such tests on this population (Figueroa, 1989 & 1990, Valdes & Figueroa, 1994). Issues such as not including students from linguistically diverse backgrounds in the norming group, not considering the match or mismatch between a student's cultural and school experiences, and not ensuring for English proficiency have led to justified accusations of bias and unfairness in testing.

In today's climate of higher accountability for ALL students, schools are considered effective when they produce students who meet specified standards related to higher order thinking skills. As a result, educators have moved to embrace assessment alternatives in the hope that they will be able to capture the more significant educational outcomes required in this new era of assessing the progress of ALL their students.

These alternative assessments have taken on several names including performance assessments, authentic assessments, and portfolio assessment. While each of these alternatives is slightly different in terms of the extent to which the assessment context is standardized, they all ask students to demonstrate specific behaviors to be assessed. In this handbook we elect to use the term performance assessment primarily because by definition it connotes the types of behaviors and products to be assessed in the classroom. Performance assessments also can serve as systematic measurements of a student's acquired knowledge. It is this form of systematic assessment of students' performances that we believe carries a greater potential for addressing the growing demands of assessment in our nation.

We begin this handbook with a section that defines linguistically diverse students. This is the fastest growing population in the nation and a population of students whose assessments needs have been systematically ignored in local and national assessment systems. Thus, a discussion of these students is imperative in the design and use of performance assessments.

In the next section, we further clarify the term "performance assessment" and offer several general cautions in designing these assessments. Related to our emphasis on linguistically diverse students, we suggest cautions unique to this population.

The third section offers what we consider an essential framework for selecting and designing performance

assessments. We describe six elements that we believe are fundamental to creating a sound performance assessment. A brief review of the literature for each element is provided, followed by a discussion of the implications of the element for linguistically diverse students.

The last section focuses on approaches for presenting performance assessment data in a meaningful and useful manner. Strategies for displaying student results over time and ideas for summarizing results from multiple assessments also are provided.

In the appendix we include a *Rating Form for Reviewing Performance Assessment*. This form is based on the six essential elements presented in this handbook and designed to guide the user in critiquing or developing performance assessment that are inclusive of linguistically diverse students. Sample assessments also are included that incorporate the six essential elements and give the reader models for creating performance assessments for linguistically diverse students.

In our attempt to bring together what we know regarding performance assessment and linguistically diverse students in this handbook, we realize that not all issues have been addressed. However, numerous references are listed to assist the reader in embarking on a further exploration of performance-related assessment for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Understanding Linguistically Diverse Students

That minority and low-income children often perform poorly on tests is well known. But the fact that they do so because we systematically and willfully expect less from them is not. Most Americans assume that the low achievement of poor and minority children is bound up in the children themselves or their families. "The children don't try." "They have no place to study." "Their parents don't care." "Their culture does not value education." These and other excuses are regularly offered up to explain the achievement gap that separates poor and minority students from other young Americans.

But these are red herrings. The fact is that we know how to educate poor and minority children of all kinds -- racial, ethnic, and language - to high levels... But the nation as a whole has not yet acted on that knowledge...

-Commission on Chapter 1(1992, pp. 3-4)

The fastest growing school-age population in the U.S. today is linguistically diverse learners. Usually referred to as limited English proficient students, the U.S. Department of Education (1995), reported 2.31 million linguistically diverse students in public elementary and secondary schools in 1991-92. This is a 70 percent increase from the 1984 Descriptive Study by Development Associates. However, these statistics are considered to be conservative given that more than 6.3 million children in the U.S. report speaking a nonEnglish language at home (National Association of Bilingual Education, 1993).

What is a linguistically diverse student? First, it is important to point out that **not** all linguistically diverse students are immigrants or recent arrivals. Elementary schools report that 41 percent of these students were born in the US. According to the U.S. Department of Education, a linguistically diverse student [typically defined as limited English proficient students] is broadly defined as an individual who:

(i) was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English and comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; or

(ii) is a Native American or Alaska Native or who is a native resident of the outlying areas and comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on such individual's level of English language proficiency; or

(iii) is a migratory and whose native language is other than English and comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and

(B) who has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language and whose difficulties may deny such individual the opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is English or to participate fully in our society. [Improving America's Schools Act Conference Report to Accompany H.R. 6, 1994, Sec. 7501 (8) (A)(B)].

A closer profile of these students indicates that nearly 43 percent of our school districts enroll linguistically diverse learners. Over 65% of these learners are in grades K-6, 18 percent are in middle school, and 14 percent are in high school. Almost 75 percent of the linguistically diverse learners speak Spanish as their native language, followed by Vietnamese (4%), Hmong, Cantonese, Cambodian, and Korean (2% each). In addition, almost 2.5 percent of our English learners speak one of 29 different American Indian languages.

With such a significant number of linguistically and culturally diverse students, federal policies and funding has been set aside to ensure equitable assessment systems. Under the Improving America's Schools Act (Conference Report to Accompany H.R. 6, 1994), specific provisions in the new statutes relate directly to assessment services for linguistically diverse [limited English proficient] students. For example, under Title I of IASA schools are required to develop or adopt high quality assessments for ALL students including linguistically (and culturally) diverse students. Moreover, under Title VII of IASA, schools must assess how linguistically diverse students as well as other students are achieving on state performance standards.

To address the unique needs of this growing student population and meet current federal legislation, educational research with language minority populations has proven to be an invaluable resource. For instance, from extensive studies by Collier and Thomas (Collier, 1987, 1989, 1992, 1995a, 1995b; Collier & Thomas, 1989, Thomas, 1992, 1995), the most essential factor for school success for English learners in grades K-12 is uninterrupted cognitive, academic, and linguistic development. Any neglect or overemphasis of any of these components may affect students' long-term development. In addition, these studies report that the sociocultural context and opportunity to develop their primary language is crucial to the academic success of linguistically diverse learners. Of equal importance is the finding that regardless of the different background characteristics of linguistically diverse learners, it takes 4-12 years of second language development to reach deep academic proficiency and native-like fluency in English.

It is from this growing literature base on linguistically diverse learners and from the recent federal legislation that a broader framework for designing performance assessment is emerging. While not fully developed, these principles can be used as a guide for developing and using performance assessments. In the following is a sample of the tenets set forth from these teachings.

- A student's perceived strongest language may vary from context to context, depending on the affect, interaction, or topic (Valdes and Figueroa, 1994). Thus, attention must be paid to the fact that developing bilingual students may know as much as monolingual English speakers, but not be able to express that knowledge in the same way. Because of these differences children cannot be assessed solely by approaches that consider performance in only one language and only in one way (Moll & Diaz 1987).

- The equitable use of performance assessments is not just in the design of materials and their procedures, but in how well the assessments interweave with effective educational reform and

teaching(Baker & O'Neil, 1994; Darling-Hammond, 1994).

- Although all students can benefit from a wide range of assessment procedures, variety is particularly important for language minority students because they: (a) are often unfamiliar with the type of standardized testing usually required in U.S. schools; (b) may have different learning and testing styles, and therefore (c) may be unable to demonstrate the extent of their knowledge at a single sitting on one designated testing day.

- Instead of depriving students of resources and equipment for completing assessments, the opposite seems valid. Wide ranging tasks that use many different performance modes and that involve students in choosing ways to demonstrate their competence allow more opportunities to assess learning including problem solving, transfer and application of knowledge (Kornhaber & Gardner, 1993).

- Whenever testing students, educational personnel should consider that:

  (a) Bilingualism is a complex phenomenon that involves all aspects of literacy, communication, and social functions so that any test that relies on English is, to some unknown degree, a test of English;

  (b) Language background, not just proficiency, must be considered within all forms of assessment; any test that does not do so may not be valid;

  (c) Tests must be proven equivalent if they are developed in both English and another language since a reliable and valid test in English will not be reliable and valid when translated into another language (APA, AERA, NCME, 1985).

- Because language is the medium used in assessments, assessment policies and practices should reflect what we know about language and its acquisition. To base a test on the assumption that there is only one correct way to respond to an item is a dubious practice since texts can (and should) be read from different perspectives (International Reading Association & National Council of Teachers of English, 1994).

- Availability of highly qualified teachers in both assessment and instruction will be required before changes in assessment result in effective instruction for "underserved students" (Darling-Hammond, 1994). Teachers of linguistically diverse students must strive toward competency and comfort in both languages of the student where possible (Valdes & Figueroa, 1994)

With a significant and growing population of linguistically diverse learners, careful measures must be taken to ensure equitable assessment of students' performance. If not, the achievement gap between the "advantaged" and "disadvantaged" will widen in our society (NCEST, 1992). Studies over the last decade have resulted in findings that can be translated into guidelines that can assist in equitable assessments. However, it will be up to state and local education agencies to begin the process of crafting assessments that reflect this knowledge and meet the educational needs of their student populations.

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Clarifying Performance Assessments

When policymakers consider mandating a national examination or system of examination, they need to be fully aware of the fact that a national test is a technology. The history of technology in general, and the testing in particular, with its ironic turns, should be read as a cautionary

tale. The nation does not yet know the answer to crucial technical and equity questions embedded in the creation of a high-stakes national examination system, nor has it estimated the potential impact upon individuals, schools, and the workplace. We should proceed with the utmost caution, examine claims, anticipate impacts, solve technical and equity problems, and put societal and institutional safeguards in place before mandating a high-stakes national examination system for all students.

- George Madaus (1994, p. 91)

While performance assessments have been used for teaching and diagnostic purposes for many years, it is only since the middle 1980s that considerable interest has been focused on its use for large scale purposes. Currently more than 40 states have adopted performance assessments, especially in the area of writing (Mitchell & Kane, 1992). With the growing use of performance assessments for accountability purposes, a better understanding of the uses of performances assessment is demanded.

In general, educators agree that performance assessments must include tasks that do not distort teaching. In addition, true performance assessments use students' previously acquired knowledge in solving problems and allow the learner to apply and transfer that knowledge in a variety contexts. While this definition appears sufficiently clear, educators find themselves varying the design of the actual performance tasks when performance assessments are used for reasons related to accountability.

Popham (1994) points out that some advocates of performance assessment insist that only *real-world* tasks be used to assess a learner's ability to use previously acquired knowledge. Others believe that *school-world* tasks which resemble school activities are acceptable for performance assessment.

In addition, educators vary on the acceptability of the type of performance assessment response. Staunch supporters of performance assessment accept only tasks that require students to construct a product or demonstrate achievement of a standard or an outcome. Examples of *constructed-responses* items are short answers, essays, oral presentations, portfolios, physical performances, construction of models, and art drawings.

Educators seeking to use performance assessments for large-scale accountability purposes sometimes include modified *selected-response* tasks. Selected-response tasks ask students to choose from pre-selected answers such as from multiple-choice or true and false items. Modified versions of selected-responses have students explain why they selected the particular response in order to understand the student's thinking process. Moreover, instead of scoring a response right or wrong, both the selected-response and the description are judged together to assess the student's thinking based on a predefined criteria.

Regardless of the perspective taken in term of task design, it is critical that performance assessments are designed and carried out under the careful eye of well-trained, assessment literate individuals. There are several reasons for this caution. For example:

Performance assessment are not intended to fit into a traditional psychometric model.

Psychometrics is an approach that measures attributes which are considered to be a property of an individual and thought to be fixed. This is why scores are interpreted in relation to a norm or where an individual's performance is compared to that of one's peers rather than to a standard or some criteria of achievement. The aim of performance assessments, on the other hand, is not to estimate and predict future performance, but simply to acknowledge achievement of a specific learning outcome as well as to show growth in a particular content domain;

Performance assessments are time-consuming.

Under performance assessment, the student is viewed as an individual and the results of the assessment are measured constructively to identify strengths and weaknesses in order to assist the individual's development or progress. As a result, the amount of time it takes to gather this information is much greater than traditional standardized testing. In fact some advocates of performance assessment insist on greater interaction between instruction and assessment in order to reduce teacher work load and ensure a closer link between what is taught and what is assessed;

Performance assessments evaluate the "best" rather than the "typical" performance.

This perspective relates to Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development". Thus rather than withholding help from a student, the student is provided with an elaborative "test" environment that is designed to elicit the best student performance possible;

Performance assessment entails multi-dimensional information.

Multiple methods of assessment are necessary if one is to gather greater breadth of information about what a student knows of a particular content area. Assessment of breadth also is important in making inferences and in generalizing from the assessment to the broader content domain;

Performance assessment requires more than a single score for reporting student achievement

Because of the multidimensional aspect of performance assessment, profiles across and within domains are a more suitable reporting process. The rationale for reporting by profiles is based on the belief that assessment should not only be used to report, but also to improve learning. If scores are to be aggregated, models must be used that result in the least loss of information; and

Performance assessment requires classroom teachers to be assessment knowledgeable.

Good performance assessments do not move the teacher away from teaching concepts, higher order skills, and active learning. However, teachers at a minimum must develop a greater understanding of assessment in order to: (1) know the purpose of performance assessment; (2) teach and give pupils practice on the desired performance criteria; (3) administer and maintain assessment records in an equitable and reliable manner; (4) interpret assessment results based on the context from which they where acquired.

In addition to these cautions, there are several issues that must be considered in the design of performance assessments if they are to be applicable to linguistically diverse students.

- Many English learners historically have been subjected to little, if any, achievement testing and to lower expectations of success than mainstream students (McKeon, 1994).

- English learners must be provided with adequate instruction and training to meet the more complex and cognitively demanding tasks in performance assessments (Navarrete, 1994; Perrone, 1993).

- Performance assessments must also be modified to meet the linguistic processing of an English learner in order that students' understand and respond appropriately to the demands of the assessment. If not, then they will perform no better than they do on current traditional academic achievement tests.

In short, these cautions clearly show the complexity of performance assessment. They also point to the areas that must be dealt with in more measured terms, if they are to be used for large scale testing purposes. However, these cautions also can be used as guidelines to ensure quality assessment -- assessments that are meaningful and more closely related to teaching and instruction.

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Understanding Essential Elements of Sound Performance Assessments

Pupils do not come to school with identical experiences and they do not have identical experiences at school. We cannot, therefore, expect assessments to have the same meaning for all pupils. What we must aim for, though, is an equitable approach where the concerns, contexts, and approaches of one group do not dominate.

- C.V. Gipps (1994, p.156)

Assessment affects many important aspects of the educational process such as educational standards, instructional methods, curricula, and school governance. Therefore, assessment decisions should not be made without careful consideration of specific criteria for selecting, designing, and evaluating student performance assessment systems (e.g., Diez & Moon, 1992; Herman, 1992; National Forum on Assessment, 1992; Wiggins; 1992). Specific guidelines have evolved in assessment in an effort to 1) develop a common language and understanding necessary to deal with a variety of challenges in assessment, 2) develop a set of working definitions for educators and researchers to work from, and 3) provide a way for accountability that is applicable to diverse student needs.

To provide guidelines for selecting and designing assessment systems for use with linguistically diverse students, we offer six essential elements. These elements are intended to provide a framework to guide efforts in developing performance assessment systems that promote educational excellence and equity for diverse students. As educators develop and select performance assessments that are appropriate for the developmental level and linguistic background of the students, these elements can answer essential questions such as the following.

1) Connect Standards to Assessment. Is the assessment linked to high content and performance standards that describe what all students should know and be able to do? Are the standards clear to the students and teachers involved?

2) Link Instruction, Learning, and Assessment. Does the assessment reflect both the content taught and the instructional approaches used?

3) Enhance Performance Assessment Practices. Is the assessment sensitive to the linguistic challenges faced by diverse students? Are promising practices in assessing linguistically diverse students considered in the design process?

4) Ensure Meaningful Multiple Assessments. Does the assessment system provide for meaningful multiple measures providing students with opportunities to demonstrate their abilities and knowledge multiple times and over several tasks?

5) Create Clear Scoring Criteria. Are the scoring criteria clear and appropriate providing usable and interpretable scores?

6) Prepare Educators to be Skilled Judges of Student Performance. Do educators have the necessary training, background, support, and resources to use the assessment system in a reliable and valid manner for linguistically diverse students? If not, what type of training needs to be provided?

The intent of this section is to provide a general understanding of how these elements apply to performance assessment and to guide the reader in applying these elements to the unique needs of linguistically diverse students. The development and use of performance assessments is an ongoing process that requires a

willingness to continuously adapt and change while pursuing improvement. It is our hope that the elements presented here will be useful in developing and selecting quality assessment systems.

1. Connect Standards to Assessment

The first step in the design or selection of performance-based assessments is to establish a consistent set of standards that describe what ALL students should know and be able to do. In an effort to ensure that students have the opportunity to learn specific knowledge and skills as well as to be able to use that information appropriately, the following two types of standards have surfaced.

Figure 1. Summary of content and performance standards

Content Standards describe what students should know and be able to do. These standards describe the information or skills essential to practice or apply in a particular discipline or content domain (Marzano, Pickering, & McTighe, 1993).

Content Standard Sample
Students use the writing process approach to write clearly for a variety of audiences and purposes.

Performance Standards describe how well students should be able to demonstrate knowledge and/or skills. They specify levels of achievement and how adept or competent a student demonstration must be (Kendall & Marzano 1995). Standards are written in a specific context by stating the format for presenting information (e.g. an essay, a dramatic presentation, an oral report, scientific experiment).

Performance Standard Sample
Students will complete 3 essays using the writing process approach. Each piece must reflect writing for at least two purposes (One of interest the student). Each piece will be rated using the District's Analytic Writing Scale which includes criteria for rating purpose, conventions, writing fluency, and voice.

While significantly different, both content and performance standards have been validated by the National Education Standards and Improvement Council, the National Academy of Education Panel on the Evaluation of the NAEP Trial State Assessment (Shepard, 1993), and the National Council on Education Standards and Testing (1992). These standards are viewed as "interdependent and necessary components of an effective standards system" (Kendell & Marzano, 1995, p. 17). Content standards are often stated as broad, goal-related abilities that develop over a long period of time and tend to place students at the center of their own learning. Performance and content standards can be broken down into benchmarks which describe expected or anticipated skills, understanding, and/or knowledge at various developmental levels. In designing performance assessment, content and performance standards allow for the measurement of students' abilities in relation to the expected levels of performance in specific domains rather than a comparison of abilities to other students.

Educators who are developing local standards at the state and/or district level must remember that it is important that standards guide decisions about assessment and instruction and therefore must be based on deep knowledge of subject matter, knowledge of how students learn and knowledge of how language, and culture intersect with schooling to influence student performance and teacher judgement (Koelsh, Estrin, & Farr, 1995). Several organizations have established documents that can be used as guides and resources in

developing local standards such as:

- *Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics* (NCTM 1989);

- *Benchmark for Science Literacy* (AAAS, 1992);

- *The Systematic Identification and Articulation of Content Standards and Benchmark*s (Kendall & Marzano, 1995);

In addition, the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) recently formulated a set of opportunity to learn standards for English learners. TESOL and the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) have collaborated to develop ESL content standards (McKeon, 1994). The New Standards Project, which is partially funded through the National Center on Education and the Economy in Washington, D.C., also is conducting pilot studies of assessment systems based on rigorous standards in mathematics, literacy, and science.

While we see a trend in the use of standards and the view that ALL students can be held to high standards, recent literature has pointed out that for linguistically diverse learners, meeting content standards is a more complex and cognitively demanding task than it is for proficient English only speaking students (McKeon, 1994). This is not to say that this population of students should not be challenged by high standards. However, linguistically diverse learners in addition to meeting standards, often are faced with deciphering the structure and function of the English language while making sense of the content to be assessed. Moreover, linguistically diverse learners may have background schooling experiences with very different curricular sequences, content objectives, and instructional methods than the ones they encounter in their current school.

When actually linking standards and assessment systems that are sensitive to culturally and linguistically diverse populations it is important to:

- Support the view that ALL students can learn to high standards, and that linguistic and cultural diversity is a valuable asset in any program;

- Ensure that standards address language proficiency AND academic achievement. Examine all educational programs and instructional approaches to ensure that students are afforded the opportunity to become biliterate in their native language and English and/or learn English as their second language while at the same time meet the challenging content and performance standards; and

- Ensure that the standards are not interpreted so rigidly that they leave no room for designing a variety of assessment strategies.

In general, as states, tribes, and schools develop their standards, it is essential that the standards reflect not only challenging content and performances, but also the cultural and linguistic diversity of their student populations. In addition, students must have equitable opportunities to meet those standards and to demonstrate their achievement or progress toward the standards. By designing standards that are sensitive to diversity we will be able to set frameworks that nurture the kind of learning that help ALL our students to become contributing members of society.

2. Link Instruction to Learning and Assessment

The current trend in education places unprecedented demands on linking assessment with instruction and the learning processes. The need for performance-based assessment is tied directly to the "new" and/or current understanding of effective learning such as:

- Learning occurs not by recording information, but having ample opportunities to experiment actively and directly with the new knowledge and mapping it into existing and/or previous knowledge (Resnick, 1989; Kline, 1995);

- Learning skills and knowledge cannot occur in isolation. Learning is dependent on the context in which it is learned and we cannot assume that what is learned in one context will transfer to another (Shepard, 1991). Also, the more authentic or "real-life" the purpose, materials, and content the more meaning it will have to the student (Kline, 1995);

- Higher order learning does not occur in a linear and sequential fashion. Motivation, self-esteem, and active engagement leads to mastery of learning skills and knowledge. This process for mastering higher order skills also helps to develop and strengthen the basic skills learning (Shepard, 1991); and

- When students are given the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of what they are learning and monitor their learning process, they will develop a sense of conscious control over their own thinking which can lead to a greater sense of self-confidence about their ability to learn (Beyer, 1987).

Much like fluent English learners, linguistically diverse students also benefit from our current understanding of learning. In addition, recent literature on language development makes it clear that learning a second language, such as English, goes beyond "good pronunciation, 'correct' grammar, and even mastery of rules of politeness" (Valdes and Figueroa, 1994, p. 34). Fluency in a second language involves mastery and control of a wide variety of elements including competence in the organizational, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic aspects of language (Bachman, 1990). Based on this knowledge, several learning implications need to be considered for linguistically diverse students:

- Learning a second language effectively occurs when it is integrated into instruction. Integration involves the incorporation of multiple media (e.g., demonstrations, visual displays, objects, and authentic materials), enhancement of students' thinking skills (e.g., allowing a clear understanding and opportunity to practice the thinking skills needed to manipulate the content), and student-centered organization of instruction (e.g., mixed academic and linguistic interactive groups) [Short, 1994]; and

- Students learning is increased when "grammatical structures are presented sequentially, and vocabulary is presented in reasonable quantities" (p. 65). Using integrated holistic approaches, prereading and prewriting activities for second language learners instead of rote drill and practices enhances learning and language development (Saravia-Shore & Garcia, 1995);

- In the developing phases of second language learning, students are allowed to use naturally occurring alternations to achieve communication in the classroom (Saravia-Shore & Garcia, 1995; Huerta-Macias & Quintero (1992);

- When learning English as a second language, students' comprehension is increased when teachers allow students more time to speak and teachers are prepared to rephrase questions and information if the students do not understand (Short, 1994),

How can these instructional approaches be incorporated into assessment? These approaches clearly require assessments to reflect effective teaching and learning practices that are inclusive of the learning needs of linguistically diverse students. Students also can be provided with opportunities to offer diverse responses that promote a range of thinking (Kline, 1995). They can be given several days to complete assessment tasks, allowing students time to experiment, draft, reflect, and revise their work. In addition, assessment strategies can include tasks in the student's first language and allow for paraphrasing in English to ensure comprehension of the task. Assessment rubrics or scoring criteria also are inclusive of the norms of second language development.

Overall, performance assessments provide linguistically diverse students with assessment systems that allow for a clear demonstration of what students actually know and can do. Assessments that do not match the instructional approaches and language of instruction often result in an underestimation of students' academic achievement.

3. Enhance Performance Assessment Practices

While what constitutes a performance assessment task may vary, particular administrative practices and task designs must be considered when including linguistically diverse students. The International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of English (1994, p. 22) point out that:

> As far as possible, assessment should be accomplished in a language that will not interfere with the individual's performance. Assessment practices should not devalue cultural differences in dialect. Although all students have the right to learn to read and write in the privileged dialect of English (often called "Standard English"), since it is the language of power, failure to use that dialect should not have negative consequences unless the requirement to use the standard English dialect is specifically stated.

Other promising practices and assessment techniques available that can be used for improving performance assessments of linguistically diverse students (August, Hakuta, Olguin, & Pompa, 1995; Rivera, 1995) include:

- Allowing extra time to complete or respond to the assessment tasks;

- Designing administration procedures to match classroom instructional practices (e.g., cooperative small groups, individual conferencing, and assessing in the language of instruction);

- Simplifying directions in English and/or paraphrasing in the students native language. Also providing additional clarifying information during and/or after administration of the assessment (e.g., synonyms for difficult words or phrases); and

- Permitting students to use dictionaries or word lists.

In addition to these recommendations, local schools and districts, in an attempt to be sensitive to their student's level(s) of language proficiency, have developed performance assessment tasks that consist of the following components.

- Scaffolding assessment tasks in a contextualized manner by:

    (a) incorporating primary sources from classroom material learned as a stimulus such as brief quotations, charts, graphics, cartoons, and works of art;

    (b) including questions for small group discussion and individual writing; and

    (c) mirroring learning processes with which students are familiar such as the writing process and reading conference activities.

- Including teacher observations, student self-reflections and parent judgements/observations of their child's progress.

- Designing assessment tasks that require different way of demonstrating knowledge or skill (e.g., exhibits, dramatic renditions, interviews, observations, self reflections, and a variety of writing

samples). As an illustration, students in mathematics can be assessed on their comprehension of math concepts though word problems, oral presentation and written explanations of their thinking about a problem.

In selecting and/or developing performance assessment tasks, it is imperative that these suggestions be considered to measure appropriately the progress of ALL students. These strategies are especially critical for assessing the progress of linguistically diverse students, but are applicable as well to other students. With such a wide range of alternatives for designing performance assessments, state and local education agencies can now begin incorporating these strategies into their own assessment systems.

4. Ensure Meaningful Multiple Assessments

Fundamental to performance assessment is the use of multiple measures. Multiple assessments offer students an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities and knowledge not only more than one time, but also over a number of different assessment measures. In addition, multiple assessments are necessary to ensure that inferences made about the student's progress are valid (Linn, 1993; Gipps, 1993; and Wiggins, 1992). Moreover, multiple assessments:

- give students the chance to show competence of a specific skill or content area in a variety ways (e.g., linguistically, logical-mathematically, spatially, kinesthetically, musically, interpersonally, and intrapersonally) [Gardner, 1993; Armstrong, 1994];

- provide students with an opportunity to reflect on and discuss their performance and progress with their teacher (Koelsch, Estrin, & Farr, 1995);

- increase the reliability of performance assessments since single performance assessments do not generalize well from one task to another (Gipps, 1994 and Wiggins, 1992); and

- allow different assessment information to be collected to meet different levels in a systematic manner (Roeber, 1995).

The use of multiple indicators is especially critical for linguistically diverse students. Compelling evidence over the last decade shows that learners who have not had "substantial" exposure to English may, on any assessment given in English, in fact be assessed on their English proficiency rather than their knowledge of the content matter (AERA, APA, NCME, 1985; Figueroa & Garcia, 1994). Through multiple assessments, linguistically diverse students are afforded opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge in a manner that best reflects their current communication capabilities. As mentioned earlier, students also must have the ancillary abilities (e.g., reading ability and writing skills) to complete the performance tasks. If not, it becomes questionable whether the tasks will have consistent meaning across time and place (Hartel, 1993).

Overall, multiple forms of assessment, when accumulated over time, provide a comprehensive picture of a students' learning. This picture is not only vital for making sound education decisions for students, but also minimizes discrepancies in an assessment process and maximizes educational access for ALL students.

5. Use Clear Scoring Criteria

The criteria used to judge student responses are another critical element of designing sound performance assessments for linguistically diverse students. Scoring criteria not only provide standards on which a judgement or decision may be based, but also offer a wider range of possible responses other than the typical right or wrong answer approach to assessment (Herman, Aschbacher, Winters, 1992). Other equally important reasons for using clear and reliable criteria include:

- To allow student responses on tasks to be used as performance assessments. Without scoring criteria, the tasks or performance remains just an instructional task;

- To identify the attributes a student's response possess and to judge the complex performance of a student's response in a reliable and valid way;

- To assist in shaping the decisions made about students and programs. The more serious the decision, the more important it is to clarify the criteria;

- To ensure consistency and validity between what is taught and what is assessed.

In view of the fact that student responses on performance assessments are fairly complex, three scoring approaches are typically used along with the assessment criteria including: checklists, numerical scales and qualitative scales.

Checklists can be used to indicate the absence or presence of a particular behavior or product. The person judging the student's performance typically uses a check (x) to signify whether the student has adequately accomplished the particular task. Checklists usually contain more items or indicators than do rating scales as illustrated in Figure 2. The advantages of checklists are their ease and ability in assisting teachers to identify and cluster those skills accomplished by students.

Figure 2. Sample checklist for assessing student's use of oral language

Student: _____ Period of Observation: _____ to _____		
Observed Language Uses	Tewa (L1)	English (L2)
1. Able to ask yes/no questions		x
2. Asks for clarifications from teacher	x	x
3. Asks for clarifications from peers	x	
4. Offers clarifications/explanations to teacher		
5. Offers clarifications or explanations to peers	x	
6. Expresses position adequately		x
7. Uses appropriate social greetings & courtesy phrases	x	
8. Shares information with teacher		
9. Shares information with peers	x	
10. Uses a variety of words across many contexts	x	

However, checklists do not always provide the depth and comprehensive understanding of a student's development unless accompanied by other assessment measures or supporting evidence (e.g., samples of student's work, teacher anecdotal notes, student self-reflections, or parent observations).

Numerical Scales are the mostly commonly used approaches to summarizing performance assessments. Unlike a checklist, numerical scales are based on a continuum of performance development rather than a dichotomy of observed or non-observed performances. This continuum is typically divided into rating scales

that range from 0 to 6 and is accompanied by a set of criteria for judging each score point. The amount of criteria used to describe each point on a rating scale varies from a single word descriptions (e.g., poor to excellent) to detailed summaries of an expected student's performance as shown in Figure 3. The advantage of using numerical scales is that more categories can be used to assess a student's performance and assist in comparing the accomplishments of a student over time (e.g., across four semesters).

Related to numerical scales are *holistic and analytic* scoring criteria. A holistic assessment scale is based on a single, integrated score of learning performance (e.g., speaking, reading, and/or writing) rather than on separate or discrete skills or traits of learning. Figure 3 illustrates a holistic scoring system for assessing oral language proficiency.

Figure 3. Sample holistic score for oral language proficiency

Student: _____ Language Observed: _____ Grade: ___ Year: ___		
Date	Description of Language Use	Level
8/94	Joshua retold the story of Sing Little Sack! Canto Saquito! He was able to keep the storyline although he would frequently take long pauses to think about what to say next. Several times he corrected himself. For example, "she finf - finds - fond a ring", but used complete phrases throughout most of the story.	3

Holistic Oral Language Proficiency Scoring Guide

Level 1: At level one, the student is able to use a few words and/or phrases in the language observed. The child is beginning to demonstrate early development in the language observed.

Level 2: At level two, the student uses a few phrases or very simple phrases. The student is clearly grappling with the use of organization , pronunciation, and vocabulary.

Level 3: At level three the student uses complete phrases to express him or herself. The student is frequently searching for correct expressions or phrases and for organizing, pronouncing in the language observed.

Level 4: At level four the student is a near fluent speaker. Although occasional errors may occur when speaking, the student's use of language organization , pronunciation, and vocabulary in the language observed is for the most part accurate, coherent, and descriptive for a student of that developmental age.

Level 5: At level five the student speaks fluently in the language observed. The student's use of language structure, pronun ciation, and vocabulary is accurate, coherent, and descriptive for a student of that developmental age .

An advantage to using a holistic score is that it provides a good "general picture" or an overall score of where a student is performing along a given scale. A major disadvantage to this approach is that it does not provide detailed information for diagnosing students. In addition, holistic scores may not be sensitive to a student's language proficiency unless some provision is made to simultaneously examine both the skills and the linguistic demands of the content area.

An analytic scoring approach is similar to holistic scoring, but requires the use of separate, multiple scales to assess different aspects of the performance. For example. in writing, the following traits would be scored

separately using criteria for each point on the rating scales: content; organization; vocabulary; grammar; and mechanics.

If more weight or value is desired for one trait over another, then additional points can be attached to "weigh" one score more than another. Figure 4 illustrates how weights can be multiplied into a set of analytic scales that range from 1 to 5. For instance, in the skill area of *Content* the student was rated a three (as indicated by the shaded cell in column 3). These "3" points were then multiplied by the "6" *WeightPoints* allocated for Content which totaled18 points.

Figure 4. Analytic weighted scores for a writing continuum

Skill Areas Assessed	Scoring Levels and Criteria					Weight Total	Points Score
	1	2	3	4	5		
Content	Topic & purpose is unclear, little supporting detail, limited refection of own thinking & experience		**Topic interesting, main idea clear, relevant supporting detail, writing reflects some of own thinking & experience**		Topic of high interest to readers, purpose & main ideas stand out, writing strongly reflects own thinking and experience	3 x 6	18
Organization	Limited useof process,sequence somewhat illogical, purpose unclear		Completed most steps of the writing process, final draft is organized and has sense of sequence, order and purpose		Writing process completed, final piece is organized with clear and appropriate sequence, strong sense of purpose.	4 x 5	20
Conventions	Use of punctuation limited, spelling not edited, grammar usage limited		Use of punctuation appropriate, spelling edited and mostly correct, errors few, grammar and usage is correct		Use of punctuation all correct and appropriate, no errors present in grammar or spelling	2 x 4	8
Sentence Fluency	Limited use of logical		**Sentences make sense to**		Sentences vary in	3 x 1	3

	sentences, message vague, limited use of vocabulary, verbs, and imagery		**reader, are logical and vary somewhat in length, some use of imagery, vocabulary appropriate, good use of verbs & descriptions**		length, are logical and concise, vocabulary use expanded, use of resources evident, strong use of imagery			
Voice	Sense awareness of audience or voice is not evident .		Sense of awareness of audience is present, sense of the author is present, language is natural		**Strong use of audience and author's presence, strong flavor and tone of the task**	5 x 4		20
			TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE = 100			POINTS ATTAINED		69

Had a student attained a score of 5, when multiplied by the 6 weighed points, the total possible points earned would be 30 (5 x 6 = 30). If a score of 5 was achieved in all trait areas, a student hypothetically could earn up to 100 points. While the scoring criteria in levels 2 and 4 are not described in this sample, the scorer is expected to infer a student's performance based on the criteria provided in levels "1", "3" and "5". For example, if a student's performance is better than that indicated for level "1" or ("3"), but does not meet the criteria for "3" or ("5"), then the student's score is assumed to be a level "2" (or "4").

The major advantage of using analytic scores is its ability to identify the strengths and weakness of a student's performance on key dimensions of a performance separately rather than simultaneously. This scoring approach also is informative for teachers, students and parents in diagnosing and understanding a learning performance. The limitation of analytic scores is the time and effort required to evaluate each student.

In general, the type of numerical scale to use will depend on the purpose for using the results. For example, when general achievement information is needed, holistic scores will suffice. If detailed information about a student's development is required, analytic scores will be more helpful. In addition, having a clear understanding of the instructional and theoretical underpinnings of the content area(s) for different grade levels ensures for sound scoring criteria development.

Qualitative scales rely on descriptions rather than numbers to interpret the performance of a student (Airasian, 1994; Popham, 1994). These scales vary from a single word summary to detailed categorical descriptions. Commonly used single word descriptions summarize a student's development. For example:

- Emergent -- Beginning ---Developing --- Independent

- No evidence of skill -- Developing Skills --- Mastered Skill.

While seemingly easy to use, these brief scale descriptions become more meaningful when accompanied with fuller descriptions for each category, much like holistic and analytic scores. Another important feature needed to interpret the meaning of a qualitative score is an understanding of the context in which a students performance was observed. As illustrated in Figure 5, a student's oral language sample is recorded as well as the context where the language was used. An assessment of the student's overall performance in the particular context is then summarized along a predetermined list of expected language functions.

These forms of scales can be accompanied with a numerical rating when educators are seeking to quantify their information for comparing a student's progress over time or for comparing the development of a group a students based on common criteria.

Figure 5. Sample oral language observation assessment form

Student: *Monica*	**Language:** *English* **Teacher:** *Ms. Willeto* **Grade:** *K* **Year:** *1995*				
Date and Context Language Observed	Student w/ Student	Student w/ Adult/Elder	Student in Small Group	Student in Large Group	Other Situations:
Reading					
Math	November 14				
Art					
Playground			September 16		

Date	**Description of Observation**
Sept. 16	Monica demonstrated her first spontaneous verbal response other than"yes " or "no". On the playground Monica watched other children coming down the slide. Every time a child began to slide she shouted over and over again "1-2-3 GO!"

Nov. 14	While playing a simple math game with Gregorio, Monica began using simple phrases to communicate . Here's an example of what took place:
	
	    G: " I've got two!"
	    M: " I've got three!"
	    G: " What's that one?"
	    M: " Don't know , me ask."
	    M: " Teacher, whooze that one?" (as she points to the card and looks at me)

Sample Rating of Language Functions Observed

	Sept. 16	Nov. 14			
Date of Observation:					
To Get Help: 1. Asks for assistance or information		DV			
2. Ask for explanations					
To Describe Environment: 3. Imitates others	PR				
4. Talks about own actions or thoughts	DV				
5. Talks about actions or work of others					
To Talk About School Work: 6. Responds/explains in simple terms					
7. Offers ideas and/or suggestions	DV	DV			
8. Initiates topics or conversations		DV			
9. Elaborates on topics					

Key to rating students' use of language functions:
BG= Beginning; DV= Developing; PR = Proficient

In deciding which scoring approach to use, it is best to keep in mind the purpose of the assessment. When simply describing or comparing performance to particular standards, a checklist may suffice. In cases where more detailed information may be needed (e.g., placement, grouping, quality of performance), then numerical and/or qualitative scales may be needed. In reviewing schools' and school districts' efforts at designing multiple performance assessments, we have found these scoring approaches used in a variety of combinations. For example, one part of Juneau School District's Language Arts Portfolio Handbook (1992) includes a descriptive continuum (qualitative) with a corresponding five point (numerical) rating scale to assess students' overall reading development. In addition, a qualitative scale (low degree-moderate degree-high degree) for scoring retelling of a story is used to profile the student's interpretation of a text or story. Other qualitative (open-ended) assessments included in Juneau's reading portion of the portfolio consist of a student's reading log, a student's reading attitude survey, and a teacher's running record.

In general, to evaluate the quality of scoring criteria several questions should be asked. Some of these are listed below.

- Are important, teachable outcomes addressed by the criteria (e.g., If writing is to be judged, are all the important competencies, elements, or benchmarks included)?

- Are the criteria clearly written and in a usable form? (i.e., Are the criteria written in concrete terms and understandable to students, parents, and teachers?)

- Do the criteria reflect current thinking of excellence in the content area?

- Have the criteria been examined for developmental, ethnic, gender, and linguistic diversity?

- Are criteria generalizable to other similar tasks or larger performance content areas?

- Do the rating strategies applied to the criteria match how the assessments will be used (e.g., Holistic scoring for global outcomes or analytic for diagnostic purposes)?

6. Prepare Educators to be Skilled Judges of Student Performance

A prerequisite for any accurate and reliable assessment is an effective and a fully competent staff. Ongoing staff development and support is essential to assure high-quality assessments for ALL students. We must strive to develop "assessment knowledgeable" educators who understand the basic principles of sound assessment and are concerned about the quality of our schools and the well being of ALL students (Stiggins, 1994). As assessments take on broader definitions and purposes we see that they can provide information for decision making and evaluation responsibilities and can act as teaching tools. Through ongoing professional development and support for educators, we can develop a wider understanding of the effect of assessment on teaching and learning as well as improve our understanding of the cultural and linguistic dimensions of assessment on diverse students.

In addition, we strongly recommend ongoing training and support in order to:

- Raise awareness of the assessment needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Educators face many challenges in meeting the unique and varied needs of linguistically diverse students and must be careful not to place these students in low-level programs due to a lack of appropriate assessment systems or understanding of assessment issues. Assessment issues such as the identification and placement of students, the evaluation of language proficiency, and the judgement of students' content area knowledge and skills are essential to educators (McKeon, 1994);

- Improve the quality of educational decision making. The main function of assessment is to improve the quality of educational decision making. Educators should never assess students without a clear understanding of what the decision is that will be informed by the results of the assessment (Gibbs, 1994);

- Help educators bring enthusiasm to assessment. Educators who understand clearly see the benefits of ongoing, meaningful assessment bring an enthusiasm that assists them in articulating these benefits to students and families;

- Support teaching and learning. If teachers are reasonably sure about what their students know, then teachers can more accurately tailor their instructional activities to what students need to know and make the best use of instructional time and energy. Assessment can provide systematic ways to determine students' status regarding such variables as knowledge, skills, and attitudes as well as reduce the chance of teachers improperly concluding progress is taking place when in fact it is not;

- Empower educators and students. Informed, well-trained teachers can establish credibility as dependable sources on student achievement. Students become self assessors, taking responsibility for their achievements and evaluating their own progress. Students also learn to improve as they are shown the difference between their performance and understandable standards of quality performance (Popham, 1995); and

- Bring about needed changes in curriculum and instruction. Training and support must be linked to curriculum and instruction. Assessments alone cannot bring about effective change. Educators must understand how assessment relates to quality instruction (Wiggins, 1993).

As part of school reform efforts educators are collaborating across programs to improve educational

programs and to raise expectations for all students. Training in assessment plays a major role in these efforts. Some topics recommended for training on assessment follow (Glaser, 1990, IRA/NCTE, 1994, Popham, 1995, Stiggins, 1994).

Validity and reliability.

Educators using performance assessments require training and support to ensure that assessments measure what they are designed to measure (validity) and that assessments can be generalized across tasks, over time, and across interpretations (reliability). These issues ensure that assessment leads to useful, meaningful conclusions and consequences.

Collecting and managing student data.

The collection and management of student data are linked directly to the purposes and uses of the data. Teachers require effective strategies for the collection and management so that assessment practices do not become burdensome and disconnected from the instructional program.

Designing and developing assessment tools.

To become effective developers and users of performance assessments, educators need clear information on "how to" design and develop quality assessment instruments and appropriate assessment tasks. Issues such as alignment with curriculum, instruction, and standards are important as well as making assessments relevant and useful for purposes intended.

Judging, rating and scoring

Those who implement an assessment system will only become fully committed to it if they are actually involved in developing, grading and interpreting the assessments. Performance assessments involve different types of judging, scoring and rating than traditional tests and require ongoing support and practice. Teacher assessment activities can provide the evidence necessary to make sensible individual student appraisals and to effectively monitor student progress. In order to effectively assign students the grades or scores that they deserve, it is essential that teachers are clear and consistent in their judging, rating and scoring of performance assessments.

Keeping biases in check.

To be fair, assessments must be free of biases based on ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, socioeconomic condition, or physical disability. In addition, the biases of teachers' individual judgements, expectations, and consequent teaching practices must be directly addressed in order to ensure that students receive a fair and equitable education.

Reporting student data.

Methods of reporting differ between large scale and classroom assessments as well as produce different kinds of results. The purposes and intentions for reporting student data should be clear and focused for educators.

It is essential that respectful and supportive environments are created that allow for risk taking and growth in the application of new performance assessments among educators. Sharing, negotiating, and collaboration are powerful elements for supporting teacher learning. These elements can be incorporated into activities such as study groups, classes, workshops, seminars, and conferences. Educators require meaningful opportunities to share ideas, thoughts, experiences, materials, and resources as well as engage in open professional dialog.

Just as it is essential to provide support structures for students to succeed, it is important to provide support structures for teachers to succeed as they assess student progress, gather evidence of challenges and achievements, and adjust instructional plans accordingly. A strong commitment to staff development is essential in supporting teachers who are playing ever increasing roles in student assessment.

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Reporting Performance Assessment Scores

> *Assessment information should be presented in a way that is useful to those who need it - students, teachers, parents, legislators, employers, postsecondary institutions, and the general public. At present, test results are often reported in technical terms that are confusing and misleading, such as grade equivalents, stanines, and percentiles. Instead they should be reported in terms of educational standards.*

> - National Forum on Assessment (1993)

A question asked most often is "How can the information collected from performance assessments be reported in a meaningful way?" First users of performance assessment must keep in mind there is no best way to report student data. Reporting can be approached in a variety of ways. However, there are three major issues worthy of consideration in any report: purpose for the assessment; strengths and limitations of the assessment; and method of presenting results.

Of utmost importance to a report is a clear description of the purpose for performance assessment. A clear purpose not only enhances communication with those receiving the results, but helps the reader in understanding the results. Reasons for reporting include:

- Giving students feedback on their work;

- Informing parents on the progress of their child;

- Comparing how groups of students progress over time;

- Justifying the use of performance assessments;

- Improving teaching and learning; and

- Identifying learning needs that may lead to continued funding or a request for funding to augment instruction;

The second major issue relates to advantages and limitations of the performance assessment. Like traditional standardized achievement tests, performance assessments are not infallible. It is for this reason that factors affecting performance assessment results need to be reported. The information presented in this handbook identifies many concerns affecting linguistically diverse students that can be used as a guide to determining strengths and limitations in the following areas.

- Knowledge of the students' background and educational experiences.

- Extent to which the performance assessment is linked to content standards and the complexity faced by students in meeting these standards.

- Extent to which the performance assessment is linked to teaching and is sensitive to the students' unique learning needs.

- Appropriateness of the performance assessment procedures, tasks, and types of assessments for students.

- Rationale for selecting scoring criteria.

- Expertise of teachers, judges, and evaluators in assessing and using assessment results for meeting the purpose of the assessment.

The third issue pertains to the method of reporting performance assessment results. While results can be presented in a variety of ways, having a clear sense of purpose will assist in deciding the best way to present the data. For example, a simple tally of scores can quickly help students in comprehending their performance on the assessment tasks. On the other hand, a school district may need a more complex interpretation of the data especially as it relates to groups of students. The next section offers several strategies and models to consider when reporting the assessments of students' performance.

Reporting Strategies

When using checklists and quantitative scales, their results can be reported several ways. The simplest technique is to predetermine the total number of points that can be attained from the assessment. After a designated period, the number of points a student acquires can then be compared with the maximum points possible. For example, information gathered from a checklist such as the one illustrated in Figure 2 can be tallied on a single sheet for a group of students (see Figure 6). The total number of skills achieved by each student can then be totaled from this summary and an average score calculated for the group.

Figure 6. Summary of students' achievement

Student	Shares Information with Others	Uses a Variety of Words in Many Contexts	Obtains Information When Needed by Asking Questions	Knows When to Talk in Classroom & in Conversations	Total
K. L. Gobi	x	x			2
C. G. Chan		x	x	x	3
M.G. Merril	x	x	x		3
B.M. Santiago	x	x			3
H.A. Zinger	x		x		2
Total	**4**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**12**
Average Number of Skills the Group Has Acquired					**2.5**

When reporting quantitative data from holistic scores, student results can be graphed to illustrate students' progress. This approach also can be used to report the average score of a group of students. Group scores can be determined for different periods by totaling the individual scores of each student and dividing that total by the number of students with holistic scores. Figure 7 shows an example of how holistic scores with a rating scale of 1 to 4 can be graphed over four quarters.

Figure 7. A graph of holistic scores
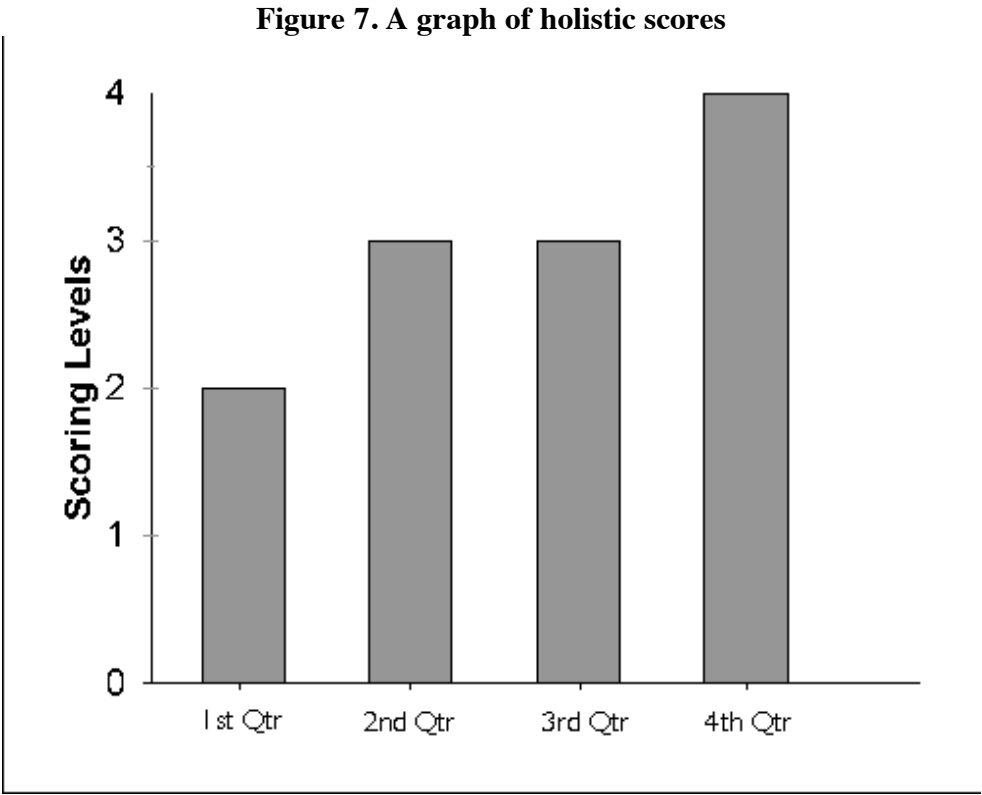
When using analytic scores, the same graphing format can be used to profile the growth of a student or group of students. We suggest reporting each rubric separately to interpret the progress of the students in each rubric. Figure 8 shows how analytic scores for six writing rubrics can be displayed in graphic form.

In addition to reporting results from a single performance assessment, many educators ask how different assessments with different scoring criteria can be combined into a single score. While several approaches can be used, we offer one method that does not demand a prerequisite course of study in statistics. However, we do not claim our approach to be the easiest method. The reason for our disclaimer is due to the fact that a simple approach cannot be applied to such a complex process.

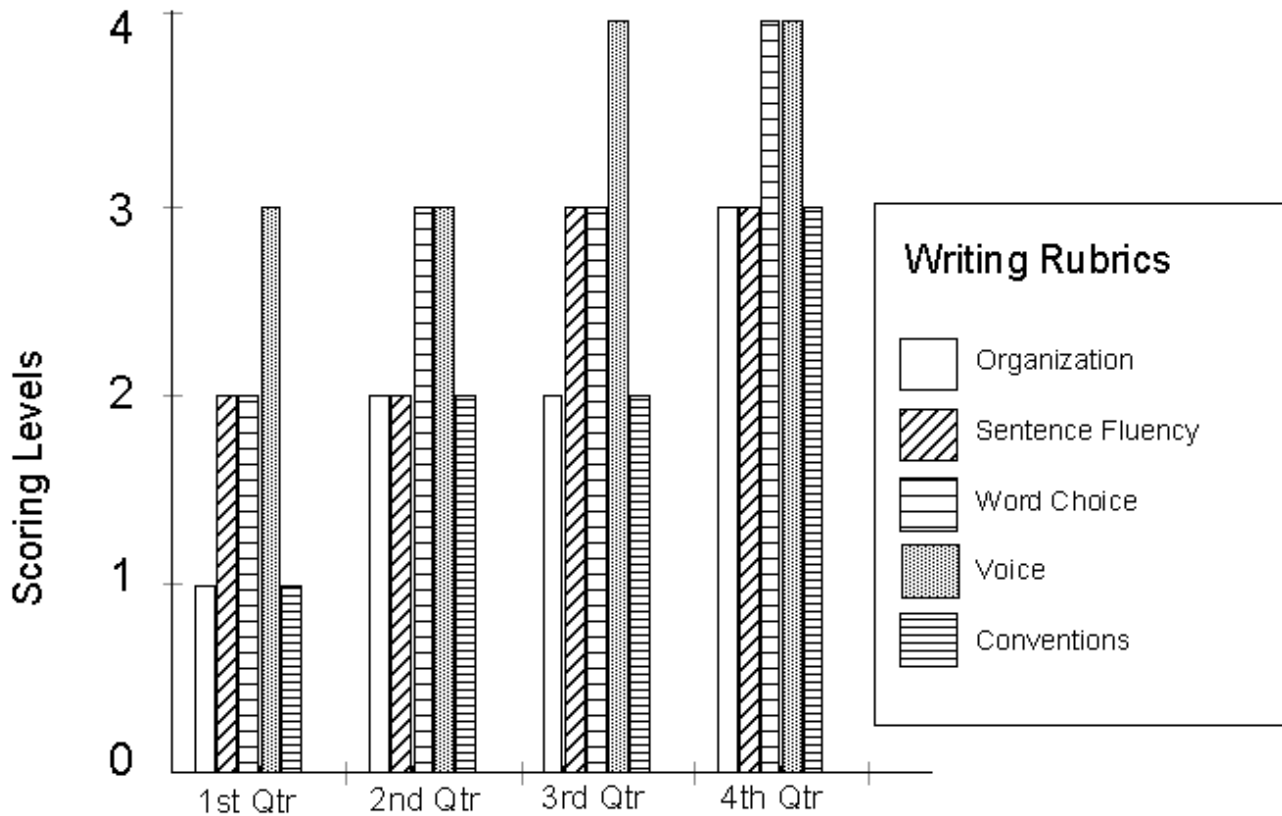**Figure 8. Graph of Analytical Scores**

Figure 9 illustrates our approach for deriving a single score from multiple assessments in reading. In Columns 1 through 4, basic information is required such as:

Col. 1: The date when the assessments were conducted;

Col. 2: The name of the assessment;

Col. 3: The total points possible for each assessment instrument; and

Col 4: The average scores attained by a group of students for each assessment.

In Columns 5 through Column 7, a series of conversions are calculated to obtain comparable scores from assessments that do not have equal point systems. For example, the Student Reading Book Log has the highest point value of 10 **vs** the Reading Attitude Survey and the Parent Observation Survey with point values of 4.

Figure 9. An approach to determining a gain score from multiple assessments

Col. 1	Col. 2	Col. 3	Col. 4	Col. 5	Col. 6	Col. 7	Col. 8	Col. 9
Date	**Title of Assessments**	**Actual Points Possible**	**Avg. Score of Group**	**Percent Equivalent**	**Point Conversion (1-5)**	**Weight Value Assigned**	**Total Score**	**Total Score Possible**

Date	Title of Assessments	Actual Points Possible	Avg. Score of Group	Percent Equivalent	Point Conversion (1-5)	Weight Value Assigned	Total Score	Total Score Possible
May, 1995	Reading Across the Curriculum (Holistic Rating Scale)	5 Level Rating Scale	1	20%	2	5	10	25 (5x5)
	Student Reading Book Log (# of books Read)	10 Books is the Goal	3	30%	2	4	8	20 (5x4)
	Student Reading Attitude Survey	4 Level Rating Scale	1.5	38%	2	3	6	15 (5x3)
	Parent Observation Survey of Child's Reading Performance	4 Level Rating Scale	2	50%	3	2	6	10 (5x2)
.						TOTAL	30	70

Col.1	Col. 2	Col. 3	Col. 4	Col. 5	Col. 6	Col. 7	Col. 8	Col.9
Date	**Title of Assessments**	**Actual Points Possible**	**Avg. Score of Group**	**Percent Equivalent**	**Point Conversion (1-5)**	**Weight Value Assigned**	**Total Score**	**Total Score Possible**
May, 1996	Reading Across the Curriculum (Holistic Rating Scale)	5 Level Rating Scale	3	60%	4	5	20	25 (5x5)
	Student Reading Book Log (# of books Read)	10 Books is the Goal	6	60%	4	4	16	20 (5x4)
	Student Reading Attitude Survey	4 Level Rating Scale	3	75%	4	3	12	15 (5x3)
	Parent Observation Survey of	4 Level Rating Scale	4	100%	5	2	10	10 (5x2)

Child's Reading Performance							
.						TOTAL	58	70

Assessment Summary: May 1995 score of 30/70 = 43% attainment of the reading goal. May 1996 score of 58/70 = 83% attainment of the reading goal. Comparison of May 1995 to May 1996 indicates positive growth. An increase of only 12 points is needed to meet the schools' goal for reading literacy.

In Column 5, the group's average score is converted into a percentage. This is done by dividing the group's average score from Column 4 by the total possible score of each assessment in Column 3. This result is then multiplied by 100 to get a percentage. For example, Reading Across the Curriculum's average group score of 1 is divided by the total possible points of 5 to obtain a percent of 20%.

However, this information may not have much meaning especially if a school, district, or state places more value on one assessment over another. To weigh assessments according to a specified value, the percentage given to each score must be converted back into a point system. One way to change the percentages into a comparable point system is to assign the percentages to a specific set of numerical values. For example, using a scale of 1 to 5 the following percent to point conversion is made and recorded in Column 6.

Percent to Point Conversation Chart

100% - 80% = 5 points
79% - 60% = 4 points
59% - 40% = 3 points
39% - 20% = 2 points
19% - 1% = 1 points

Once the percents are converted into this point system, a predetermined weight scale then can be assigned to the student's converted score. In our approach we use a 1 to 5 weight system. The highest number of points (5 points) is assigned to *Reading Across the Curriculum* because in our hypothetical situation, this assessment instrument allows teachers to assess their student's use of reading strategies across several subject areas. The Student's Reading Log (# of books read) is assigned 4 points because of the research that indicates that the more children read the better readers they become (Krashen, 1994). In some cases, assessments are given the same weights. In other cases, assessments are allocated lower points based on their value to a school, district, and/or state education agency.

The last step in determining a single score from the multiple assessments is to multiply the points assigned in Column 6 to the weighted points in Column 7 for each assessment. These results are then recorded in the Total Score column in Column 8. The same calculations can be conducted at later time. In our example, we calculated an equivalent set of scores nine months later on the same assessments. These two sets of scores allow us to compare the percent of goal attainment in reading over a twelve month period.

By dividing the total score possible in Column 9 by the total score at the bottom of Column 8, the percent of point difference can be determined. Thus, in May of 1995 our sample group of students achieved 43% of the reading goal or points possible using the four assessment reading measures. A major increase was then demonstrated in May of 1996 where students attained 83% of the reading goal. In carrying out performance assessments, we highly recommend a period to field test and determine whether the data actually meet the

purpose of assessment and will not have a negative impact on students.

Overall, several approaches to reporting the performance of students are available. These approaches range from simple checklists to complex conversions of multiple assessments to single scores. However, critical to any approach is a thorough understanding of the design of the performance assessments that is the foundation for ensuring reliable and valid reporting. Moreover, time must be allocated to ensure that the performance assessments provide the kind of information needed to meet the purpose of assessment.

Summary and Conclusions

> Tread cautiously when drawing conclusions from any evaluative measure; children's futures are at stake.
>
> - C. Uzua (1994, p. 175)

Performance assessments have the potential to provide educators with assessment strategies for gathering and interpreting information about diverse students' knowledge and achievements in relation to current process-oriented educational standards. Students who are acquiring English while learning challenging content can benefit from assessments that show what they can actually do both in language and in academic content areas. Performance assessments also can provide the flexibility in assessment that students and educators require to effectively modify and adapt assessments as appropriate.

While there are numerous positive aspects of the use of performance assessments with linguistically diverse students, they are not without challenges. These challenges are related mainly to issues such as cultural and linguistic appropriateness of assessments, time management, scoring and reporting, and adequate training and instruction for students, teachers, and families. It is for these reasons that ongoing support and opportunities for professional development and dialog are essential for educators using performance assessments. Local school reform efforts will vary in ways that make sense to local schools and communities, but we believe that they must also share a common vision of high performance expectations for ALL students.

We offer a framework which can be used as a guide in the development of performance assessments that address the challenges faced by linguistically diverse students. Essential elements of the framework presented in this handbook include:

- Bridging standards to assessment;

- Linking instruction, learning, and assessment;

- Broadening performance assessment practices;

- Ensuring meaningful multiple assessments;

- Using clear scoring criteria; and

- Preparing educators for assessment literacy.

Each of these elements can facilitate the development of an assessment system that supports multiple methods of assessment while at the same time making sure that each one is used appropriately and promotes educational excellence and equity for all students. This framework can also help ensure that assessment is

not only used to measure student progress but also to inform the educational process.

Performance assessment scores can be reported for a variety of reasons and audiences. How data are presented depends greatly on the purposes and intentions for the use of the data. We offer several strategies and methods in the section on Reporting Performance Assessment Scores as models and suggestions. To ensure reliable and valid reporting, it is critical that there is clear understanding of the purpose and design of the performance assessments used.

In designing performance assessments, we must keep in mind that our childrens' life choices will largely depend on the skills, attitudes, and values they have acquired at school. As they enter the work force in the twenty-first century, they will need to be able to access and make use of increasingly large amounts of information, to form and evaluate and challenge new ideas, and to think critically and creatively about their society and their environment. Programs for linguistically diverse students that teach students challenging content and necessary language skills, as well as actively involve students in their learning and assessment can empower them with the abilities they will need to improve their life choices.

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Appendix

Appendix Brief

Rating Form for Reviewing Performance Assessments

Sample Reading Assessment

Sample Writing Assessment

Appendix Brief

The following asssement samples are included to provide the reader with

models of assessement systems that can be adapted and/or modified for local needs. These models evolved from our numerous discussions with educators serving culturally and linguistically diverse students and a careful review of serveral current assessment models. We developed them with the English learner in mind as is reflected in the scoring guides.

Each model contains a summary based on the framework for understanding essential elements of performance assessment presented in this guide. The summary includes: 1) a content standard, including the goal of the assessment and benchmarks of expected skills at various developmental levels; 2) basic instructional assumptions which focus on necessary instructional activites that match the assessment task; 3) a task description indicating the grade(s) the assessent task is appropriate for and general information about the sturucture of the task; 4) types of multiple assessments used such as rating scales, student self-reflections, and parent questionnaires; 5) scoring methods included in the assessment process such as holistic rating scales and short answers; 6) recommendations for staff training listing topics that may be required to effectively implement the actual assessment tasks and appropriate instructional activites; and 7) scheduling possibilities for administering the task (e.g., quarterly, monthly, or biannually).

Following the summary, each task includes background information and suggestions for administering and scoring the task. An Individual Student Profile is included as a model of a record keeping form. A holistic scoring guide is included for actually scoring student performance. The role of students and families in assessment is reflected in the student self-reflection and parent questionnaire.

In the appendix, you will also find a Rating Form for Reviewing Performance Assessments. This form highlights the essential elements framework presented in the Guide. The Rating Form is designed to be used for critiquing the sample assessments and identifying modifications that may be necessary to meet your local goals and needs. Keep in mind that these samples are models that should be adapted and used only as guides in developing your own performance assessment task systems.

Rating Form for Reviewing Performance Assessments

Instructions for Use: Use this rating form to review the following performance assessments. Rate each item in terms of its relevance to your own assessment needs. Consider using this form for review of other performance assessments as needed.

Name of Assessment: _____Review Date: _____

Rating Scale:

4 = Information found relating to this item matches completely with our needs.

3 = Information found relating to this item is somewhat relevant to our needs but will need some modifications to completely meet our needs.

2 = Information relating to this item has very little relevance to our needs but with major changes we might be able to use the information or strategy.

1 = Information found relating to this item is absolutely not relevant to our needs at his time.

1)	**The performance standards reflect our school, district, or state standards.** Notes: What adaptations may make it more useful?	_____ rating
2)	**The recommended instructional approaches for this performance assessment match our own instruction?** Notes: What adaptations or modifications may be needed to create a stronger match?	_____ rating
3)	**The performance assessment is sensitive to the culturally and linguistically diverse students in our school/district.** Notes: What adaptations or modifications would be needed?	_____ rating
4)	**The multiple measures selected meet our assessment needs.** Notes: What adaptations may make the assessment more useful?	_____ rating
5)	**The scoring criteria are clear and usable.** Notes: What scoring technique is used? What adaptations may make the scoring criteria more useful?	_____ rating
6)	**The recommend assessment literacy skills and/or training are appropriate for our school/district.** Notes: What training and/or resources are needed?	_____ rating
Overall to what extent does this performance assessment meet your purposes?		_____ overall rating

Summary of EAC-West's Reading Conference Assessment Sample

Standards Assessed
Students will read and understand a variety of materials using effective reading strategies.

Benchmarks Toward Standard

Level 4 - Reader reads a wide variety of genres and levels of text with confidence with few or no errors. Applies strategies flexibly and in an integrated manner.
Level 3 - Reads variety of materials at comfortable level. Uses strategies from all cuing systems with increased frequency.
Level 2 - Reads familiar text and is beginning to discover cuing system strategies to apply to reading.
Level 1 - Understands that print has meaning and will attempt to approximate reading of environmental print and/or print in very familiar text.

Basic Instructional Assumptions

- Students have opportunities to read for multiple purposes in the classroom environment.
- The focus of reading is on meaning and reading skills are taught within the context of "real" reading and in "mini-lessons".
- A variety of highly motivating reading materials is available for students to choose from.
- Students have opportunities to read aloud and silently individually and in small groups.
- Students have opportunities to discuss and write about reading material and the strategies they are using.
- English language learners have opportunities to read in their first language when possible, as well as in English.
- Students are encouraged to apply background knowledge before reading and to make connections to their own lives.
- Students are encouraged to self-reflect on their reading abilities, strategies, and growth. Student perceptions are valued.

Task Description

- Geared for Grades 1-6 and/or 9-12 English Language Development Programs and Reading Programs with low numbers of students.
- Students clearly understand the purpose & structure of the task
- Assessment may be conducted in student's first or second language where appropriate
- Holistic rating scale of reading development expanded to reflect second language development

Multiple Assessments Used

- Teacher Observation
- Student Self-Reflection
- Parent Questionnaire
- Direct Questioning

Scoring Methods Applied

- Checklist
- Holistic Rating Scales
- Anecdotal Note Taking
- Tally Counts
- Likert-Like Rating Scale

Training Recommendations for Staff Training

- Creating a Literate Environment
- Literature-Based Reading Programs
- Reading Development and Theory, and Cuing Systems
- Management, Administration, and Scoring of Reading Conferences
- Reading Strategies and Miscue Analysis
- Children's Literature

Scheduling Possibilities

- Pre-Post
- Quarterly

EAC-West's Sample Reading Conference Assessment Task

Attached is a reading assessment approach that has evolved out of literature-based reading programs. Reading conferences provide teachers with opportunities to collect reading samples and document students' reading growth and development by listening to their students read and then asking questions about what was read and strategies that were used to decode and encode printed text. The focus is on what students are actually doing and the strengths that they possess as they read. During reading conferences a teacher can assess students' attitudes, strategies, reading development, and comprehension. We selected this approach because it allows for the assessment of multiple aspects of reading.

In a Reading Conference a student is asked to discuss a reading selection before he/she actually reads it to a teacher so that book knowledge and application of background knowledge can be assessed. The student then reads aloud a section of the text while the teacher takes notes on miscues made and strategies used by the reader. Following the read-aloud the teacher asks the student general questions about text to assess comprehension and strategies that the student is aware of using to decode text. Each reading conference should take 10-20 minutes. While developing this reading conference, we tried to keep the administration manageable and useful for the classroom teacher to inform instruction and to use as part of an assessment system.

Guidelines for Conducting the Reading Conference

Before using the reading conference approach for systematic assessment, conferencing should be practiced with a few students in the class. You can demonstrate to your students how a conference is held and explain any details to them when you feel ready. You can begin conducting conferences with more students on a regular basis once you and your students are comfortable with the process. You may choose to conference more often with new students or students who are struggling with their reading because they are acquiring English as a second language or because of a special need.

The conference should take place at a time and place where there will be few or no distractions or interruptions. The other class members can be told to save questions until the conference is over or be directed to another adult in the classroom. Remind the students that it is important to work quietly during the conferences.

One reading conference per quarter should be recorded on the *Individual Student Reading Profile*. You may find that you want to conduct more conferences on a regular basis. The sample presented here is designed so that you can record one conference per school year quarter.

We recommend that two of the recorded conferences be conducted with familiar reading material - material that the student is familiar with and has read before, and two of the recorded conferences be with unfamiliar material that the student has not read. With the unfamiliar material the teacher should provide two or three selections that are unfamiliar to the student and allow the student to choose one. The text should be challenging enough that the student will make miscues that allow the teacher to observe the student's reading strategies but not so difficult that it causes the student to be frustrated. If the student has difficulty choosing a text for the familiar text conference, the teacher can assist the child in choosing a book that meets these criteria.

Notes on Miscue Analysis

One part of the reading conference is a miscue analysis. A miscue is something said or read in place of the printed text. Miscues are not considered mistakes but are deviations from text that a reader makes as he/she processes the written text. The types of miscues that a reader makes can reveal his/her concepts about reading and the reading strategies he/she is or is not applying such as:

- Is the student reading for meaning?
- Do the student's miscues retain meaning or disrupt it?
- What does the student do when he/she comes to an unknown word?
- Is the student depending on one strategy?
- Is the student aware of the strategies available to him/her?
- Are the first language and background experiences of the student influencing comprehension when the student reads in her/his second language?
- Is the student applying different strategies in L1 than in L2?

The version of miscue analysis suggested here is adapted from the Classroom Reading Miscue Analysis (CRMA) which is an elaborate more formalized miscue procedure developed by Denver Area Coordinators/Consultants Applying Whole Language to help teachers efficiently gather miscue data (Valencia, 1990). For more information about miscue analysis procedures refer to the resources listed in the references section (Allen & Watson, 1976; Goodman, Watson, & Burke, 1980 & 1987, Goodman, Bird & Goodman 1992, and Weaver, 1988).

In this version of a miscue analysis the teacher uses the Reading Conference Record Form to record miscues as the student reads aloud. Notes about strategies students use and whether or not corrections are made can be noted as well. In more elaborate and formalized miscue analysis, the teacher makes a copy of the actual text and notes miscues right on the actual copy. The teacher may also audiotape the conference for analysis.

In analyzing miscues students make, it is important to understand the cuing systems: graphophonic (letters/sounds), syntactic (grammar), and semantic (meaning). Some common reading strategies include sounding out, re-reading, skipping and reading ahead, predicting what would make sense (context clues), using picture clues, and asking for help. For example if a student makes a miscue by saying "frog" when the actual text says "four" and then self corrects because he/she realizes that frog makes no sense in this context, he/she is applying knowledge he/she has about meaning, grammar, and phonics. This tells you that the student is reading for meaning - making sense of what he/she is reading. When working with English language learners it is important to be knowledgeable about the sound system of the students' first language so that mispronunciations are not considered miscues. For example, many Asian English language learners may mispronounce rice by saying "lice".

In addition, pronouncing words correctly does not guarantee that the words are understood. Some readers may not make any miscues but still not comprehend what they have read. Other readers may make several

miscues but still have a clear understanding of what they have read.

Reading Conference Procedures

Prior to a conference inform the student that it will be held at a particular time. If the conference will be with familiar material, the student should be asked to be prepared by selecting a familiar text that he/she can read aloud and discuss during the conference. If the conference will be with unfamiliar text to the student, the teacher needs to select two or three texts for the student to choose from.

During the reading conference the teacher sits with a student and discusses the questions on the Conference Record Form Before Reading. These questions are designed to assess book knowledge, "set the stage", and encourage the application of background experiences to reading. Allow the student to refer to the book when answering these questions

The teacher then asks the student to read aloud a section of the text or the whole text as the teacher listens to him/her read and notes miscues and strategies. The teacher or student may choose the section ahead of time or at the time of the conference. The teacher should let the student know that he/she will be taking notes about the passage and on the student's reading. Begin the read aloud with a statement like the following: "Please read this passage aloud. If you come to a word you don't know, do what you would normally do when you are reading alone. I'll ask you some questions about the passage and your reading when you are finished. We can then talk about other books or a follow up project."

Following the read aloud the teacher asks the strategy and comprehension questions listed on the Reading Conference Record and rates the responses. If the student is reading from a familiar text, he/she will be able to answer questions relating to the whole story. If the text is unfamiliar, the teacher can substitute appropriate questions about the particular passage read aloud. Several questions are listed on the Record Form with space for the teacher to add questions that are more specific to the passage read. Other comprehension questions may include: Where did the story take place? When did the story take place? Who is the story about? What is the main character's problem or goal? How was the problem solved or the goal achieved?

The teacher can use this time to point out other books that the student may find interesting, teach a new strategy or skill that the teacher feels the student needs, point out strategies that the student is using effectively, etc. The conference can also be used to discuss follow up projects to the literature such as designing a book cover, writing to the author, making a diorama of a scene from the book, cooking something mentioned in the book, or preparing a skit or short dramatic production based on a part of the book.

Scoring and Interpreting a Reading Conference

The following *Individual Student Reading Profile* provides a place to record results on a quarterly basis so that the information can be used for reporting and evaluation purposes.

The total score from the three sections (before reading, during reading, and after reading) of the Reading Conference can be calculated on the Reading Conference Record and then recorded on the *Individual Student Profile*. The During Reading section refers to the attached *Reading Matrix for Linguistically Diverse Students* for a rating.

The completed Reading Conference Record Forms should be kept by the teacher as documentation and for conferences with parents or other school staff members making any decisions about the student and his/her placement.

The Sample *Individual Student Reading Profile* includes space to record four assessment periods. If more or

fewer dates are desired, we recommend adapting the Profile form to meet individual needs.

In addition to the reading conference ratings, results from the student's self reflection and parent observation should also be recorded on the *Individual Student Profile*.

Note: The *Reading Matrix for Linguistically Diverse Students* may also be used to give students an overall ratings on their reading based on observations in reading tasks other than the actual reading conference. A sample *Student Reading Level Record* for use with the Reading Matrix is included.

The Reading Conference Record

Student: _____ Grade Level: _____ Teacher: _____

Date: _____ Language Used in Conference: _____

BEFORE READING: Check each question that the student answers successfully. Use the rating key to give an overall rating. *(Keep the book in front of the teacher and student so that the student can read from the book and/or point to the title, author, illustrator, copyright, or dedication.)*

- What is the title of the book?
- Is the book dedicated to anyone?
- Who is the author?
- Why did you choose this book?
- Who is the illustrator?
- When was the book published? or Copyright date?
- Does this book remind you of another book or an experience you have had? Explain.

Overall Before Reading Rating: *(circle one)* 1 = student answers 5-7 of the questions correctly 2 = student answers 3-4 of the questions correctly 3 = student answers 1-2 of the questions correctly	**Comments:**

DURING READING *(Check all that apply and complete the miscue analysis form)*

1. Familiarity with Text: ___ Familiar Text ___ Unfamiliar Text
2. Approximate Reading Level of Text:_____
3. Type of Text:
   ___ Picture Book ___ Fiction ___ Non-Fiction ___ Text Book ___ Other
   _____
4. Portion of Text Read:
   ___ Whole Text ___ Chapter ___ Section of Text ___ Other
   _____
5. Number of words in the passage read aloud:

___ less than 100 ___ 100-199 ___ 200-299 ___ 300-399 ___ 400 or more

6. Miscue Analysis (Use form below while student reads aloud.)

Miscues				Strategies
word(s) from text	miscue	affects meaning	no affect on meaning	Types of strategies observed: re-reads, sounds out skip/return, uses picture clues, substitutes a word, uses context word clues, asks for help)
e.g. *toad*	*frog*		X	*re-read, corrected to toad*

7. After the student has finished reading, ask: "What do you do when you come to a word or group of words that you do not know? Note the response below.

Overall During Reading Rating: Based on the information attained while the student is reading aloud, use the Reading Matrix for Linguistically Diverse Learners to rate (1-4) the student's development level in reading.

Overall During Reading Score: _____

AFTER READING: Check each question that the student answers successfully and then use the rating key below to give an overall rating. (Delete or add questions as appropriate to match the content of the passage read.)

-
  - 1. What is this story (or section) mainly about?
  - 2. After _____ (an event) what happened next?
  - 3. Where (or when) did this story or section take place?
  - 4. If you could be a character in this story (or section), which one would you be? Why?
  - 5. If you could talk to the author, what would you say?
  - 6. If you could change the story or section, how would you change it?
  - 7. Do you know of any other stories like this one?

- ○ 8. Other?

Overall After Reading Rating: (circle one) 1 = No complete answers-shows little or no comprehension 2 = Somewhat complete response-shows some comprehension 3 = Near complete response-shows near complete comprehension 4 = Complete Answer-Shows complete comprehension	Comments:

Total Score

Before Reading (1-4)		**Developmental Reading Phase and/or Level***
During Reading (1-4)		Total Score of:
After Reading (1-4)		
Total Score (Points possible 3-12)		3-5 = Early Reader, Level 1 6-8 = Beginning Reader, Level 2 9-10 = Developing Reader, Level 3 11-12 = Fluent Reader, Level 4

* Refer to the Reading Matrix for Linguistically Diverse Learners

Reading Developmental Matrix for Linguistically Diverse Learners

Level: Phase	Characteristics
Level 4: **Fluent** **Reader**	The reader can carry meaning across chunks of text and can understand a variety of texts from various content areas. Reader consistently connects knowledge from text with own personal background knowledge. Reader has confidence in reading abilities and usually recognizes errors and needs for self-correction. Reader consistently uses strategies flexibly and integrated from semantic (meaning), syntactic (grammar structure) and graphophonic (sound-symbol) cuing systems. Reader reads for a variety of purposes, chooses reading material selectively, and reads a variety of topics and authors. Reader may read aloud primarily in large, meaningful phrase groups. Some regressions, repetitions, and deviations from actual text may be present but do not detract from the overall structure or meaning of the reading piece. English language learners' pronunciation may be influenced by first language while meaning and structure maintained. Mostly reads with expression.
Level 3: **Developing** **Reader**	Learner knows English writing system well enough to read with meaning. Learner has limited ability with content area textbooks and requires guidance to establish context and to develop academic vocabulary. The reader is utilizing strategies from semantic, syntactic, and graphophonic cuing systems with more frequency and accuracy (predicting, confirming, rereading, inferring, etc.). Occasionally English language learner may depend

	on graphophonics (sounding out) due to limited background knowledge, cultural knowledge, or English language knowledge. Reader is reading for multiple purposes and will take risks choosing unfamiliar text. Reader is developing increased awareness that words can have can have more than one meaning. When reading aloud may read primarily in three-or four-word phrase groups. Some smaller groupings may be present. English language learners' pronunciation influenced by first language yet phrasing seems appropriate and preserves the meaning. Reader reads aloud occasionally with expression. Reader usually connects knowledge from the text with his/her own background knowledge.
Level 2: Beginning Reader	Learner may read simple words and phrases in English, know the alphabet, and make generalization about letter sound relationships inductively through familiar words. Reader is beginning to use prediction and confirmation strategies - ESL readers may wrongly predict or not recognize errors. Due to some gaps in cultural and linguistic knowledge of English, the learner may frequently depend more heavily on graphophonic cues (sounding out) and less on semantic (grammar) and syntactic (meaning) cues. Reader begins to connect knowledge from text with own personal background knowledge. Details in reading sometimes overlooked or misunderstood. Reader is beginning to recognize some sight words within the context of whole text. English language learners may begin to apply first language reading skills to the English language system. When reading aloud may read primarily word by word or two word phrases with some three or four word groupings. Read-alouds may sound "choppy". Pronunciation largely influenced by first language.
Level 1: Early Reader	Learner is developing an understanding of the concept of letters and words, will "pretend" to read relying on memory or using picture cues. The learner is developing print and book knowledge including: front to back, left to right, roles of authors & illustrators, etc. Learner is beginning to recognize letters of the alphabet and sounds they make. Letter sounds in isolation may be very distorted and hard to remember. Learner is beginning to read familiar words and short phrases. English language learners are frequently applying first language sound system and word meanings to reading in English.

Student Self Reflection on Reading

Name of Student: _____ Name of Teacher: _____ Date: ___

Language(s) you read in_____

Language 1 _____	**Language 2 _____**
1. How would you rate yourself as a reader in this language?	1. How would you rate yourself as a reader in this language?

(4 = Excellent) (3 = Good) (2 = Fair) (1 = Poor)	(4 = Excellent) (3 = Good) (2 = Fair) (1 = Poor)
2. I like to read in this language. (Often) (Sometimes) (Seldom or Never)	2. I like to read in this language. (Often) (Sometimes) (Seldom or Never)
3. I like other people to read to me in this language. (Often) (Sometimes) (Seldom or Never)	3. I like other people to read to me in this language. (Often) (Sometimes) (Seldom or Never)

4. What do you do when you come to words you don't know ?

5. The best thing about reading is...

6. The worst thing about reading is...

Reading Questionnaire for Parents

Dear Parent,

As part of your child's reading assessment score we are asking for your observations about his/her reading in the last three months. Your observations are very helpful to us in assessing your child's reading growth and in planning the reading program. *Thank you* for taking some time to respond to the following statements that apply to your child:

Name of Child _____ Grade_____ Date_____

Name of Parent of Guardian _____ Name of Teacher_____

How would you rate your child's overall reading abilities throughout the last three months? (Check one.)

        _____ 4 = excellent
        _____ 3 = good
        _____ 2 = fair
        _____ 1 = poor

Please rate each statement.

Statement	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely

My child likes to read.			
My child likes to be read to.			
My child tries to read in everyday situations like street signs, food boxes, and store signs.			
My child seems to understand what he or she reads or what is read to him/her.			
My child is choosing a wider variety of books.			
My child tries to figure out unknown words when reading by guessing, sounding out, re-reading, or reading ahead.			
My child seems to make connections between books and his/her own life.			
My child prefers to read in his/her first language.			
My child prefers to read in English.			
Comments:			

Sample Individual Student Reading Profile Summary

Student Name _____ Grade _____ Teacher_____

Student's First Language_____ Second Language _____

School Year_____ to _____

Date of Conference				
Language Used in Conference				
Language of Text				
Text Familiar or Unfamiliar to Student	__ familiar __ unfamiliar	__ familiar __ unfamiliar	__ familiar __ unfamiliar	__ familiar __ unfamiliar
Title of Text Read				
# of words in passage read aloud				

Teacher's Total Score of Reading Conference Record (3-12)				
Student's Reflection on Reading (1-4)				
Parent's Rating of Student's Reading (1-4)				
Comments (optional)				

Student Reading Level Record for Use with Reading Matrix for Linguistically Diverse Learners

Teacher Name: _____ School: _____Year: _____

Student Name	Reading Level				Comments
	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	
	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	
	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	
	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	
	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	
	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	
	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	
	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	
	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	date: level:	

Summary of EAC-West's Writing Performance Assessment Sample

Standards Assessed

WRITING: Communicates clearly in writing for a variety of audiences and purposes. In command of conventions (grammar and mechanics) of writing.

Benchmarks Toward Standard

Level 6 - Writes well in a few genres (content-specific). Uses rich vocabulary and understands how to use writing conventions and organization.
Level 5 - Can write in a limited context. Can plan, organize and polish writing. Continues to refine use of writing conventions and organizations.
Level 4 - Writes own messages or stories using invented spelling. Attempts to use standard writing conventions and has a sense of organization.
Level 3 - Begins using English alphabet and invented spelling. Although ocassionally intersperses English alphabet with scribble to communicate messages especially when writing "lengthy" notes, songs, or stories.
Level 2 - Understands the purpose of and can recognize letters and words. Is starting to write recognizable letters or words.
Level 1 - Understands that writing is a form of communication and attempts to communicate in some form of writing.

Basic Instructional Assumptions

- Teachers teach students about the writing process (what students think and do as they write) and about writing forms.
- Students experience writing rough drafts to pour out ideas and then revise and edit these drafts before making a final copy.
- Students have opportunities to write for genuine audiences.
- Students' previous experiences and knowledge is valued and incorporated into their writing.
- Students write collaboratively in groups and individually.
- Students' and parents' perceptions and attitudes about writing are sought.

Task Description

- Geared for Grades 2-12
- Performance tasks are scaffolded to help students focus, build, and enhance thinking on the assigned topic before completing final writing task.
- Prompts are included to help students focus on the form and type of writing required for completing the writing task.
- Assessment instructions are simplified for better understanding of the performance tasks. In addition, instructions can be paraphrased and translated into a student's first language.
- Holistic rating scale of writing development reflects second language development

Multiple Assessments Used

- Judgement of Student Writing Development

- Student Self-Reflections
- Parent Questionnaire

Scoring Methods Applied

- Likert-Type Rating Scales
- Short Answers
- Holistic Rating Scale

Recommendations for Staff Training

- Writing process approach and writing development for first and second language learners
- Administration of the writing assessment
- Expertise in scoring individual and group tasks.

Scheduling Possibilities

- Pre-Post
- Quarterly (Used in this assessment)
- Each Semester
- Monthly

EAC-West's Writing Assessment Sample

Attached is a writing assessment approach adapted from the California Student Assessment System[1] and the ESL Portfolio Writing Assessment Component of Fairfax County Public Schools ESL Program[2.] These approaches were selected because of their capacity to assess the writing development of diverse student populations. In this writing assessment sample, the student is asked to write a letter to a friend or relative about their first day in school. The topic was selected because it reflects something most students experience at least once a year.

To help students demonstrate their best work, we designed an open-ended topic to be developed over a three-day process to approximate the writing process taught in the classroom. This three-day session may be expanded over more than three days. However, we recommend that all students be given the same time period to complete the assessment tasks.

To adapt this particular assessment approach, we suggest substituting topics and writing tasks that are aligned with the school's own state and local standards and instructional approaches. In this example, we designed our own standards, instructional assumptions, assessment task, and scheduling to give the reader an opportunity to visualize how this assessment approach might be administered.

The purpose of the second assessment task (Part 2) is designed to enhance students' performance in small groups or in large groups prior to actually writing. In this assessment task we have selected a brainstorm activity. Other activities to consider include: (1) reading from a primary source; (2) reading a brief scenario; (3) examining a particular graphic; or (4) webbing or clustering main-idea topics with details for each topic. Part 2 tasks can be followed with short questions if needed.

[1] San Diego County Office of Education, Professional Development Center: Southern Consortium, History/Social Science Project, & California Assessment Program. (1993). **California Student Assessment System for History-Social Science: Grades 5, 8, & 10**. San Diego, CA.

[2] Fairfax County Public Schools. (1992). **ESL Portfolio (Oral, Reading, Writing Component)**. ESL Program, Fairfax, VA.

The third part of the assessment task allows students time to focus on the expression of their message and not worry about the grammatical aspects of writing. In addition, students are provided with a clear purpose for writing (to communicate with a friend about the first day at school). Students also are given bulleted prompts and a sample to reinforce their understanding of the task.

The fourth part of the assessment occurs the next day. Students are asked to review their draft and edit their ideas using references where appropriate (e.g., dictionaries and thesauruses). While a particular time is not allocated for drafting and editing the letter, older students may need 30 to 45 minutes to complete thetask. Younger students may need 15 to 30 minutes. The directions for the task can be paraphrased and/or translated into the student's first language to promote understanding the writing task.

We recommend that students be informed of the criteria by which they will be rated. Each writing task can be collected in a portfolio and used throughout the year for observing each student's progress. In addition, the first and last writing

samples can be used as pre- and post- assessments of the student's annual progress. The Sample Writing Assessment also can be adapted for use in another language where assessment of the student's proficiency in his/her first language or other languages is needed.

Writing Assessment Directions

The writing assessment tasks are divided or scaffolded into four parts. We recommend that the assessment be administered over a three day period as follows:

Part 1: On day one, students complete self-reflection on writing.

Part 2: On day two, whole group brainstorm on and discussion of writing topic.

Part 3: On day two, students work individually and write first draft of paper.

Part 4: On day three, students work individually to review and edit written work.

Part 1: Day One Instructions

During the first day of the writing assessment, have students complete the self-reflection form entitled *What I Think About My Writing*. Distribute the surveys and explain to students:

Today, I would like you to think about your writing experiences over the last quarter and use this form to describe those experiences. As you can see there are four questions. I will point to each question, read it aloud, and give you plenty of time to answer the question. There are no right answers and you do not have to worry about your spelling or grammar. I would like you to think about your answer very seriously and try to write it as clearly as possible. Do you have any questions? Okay, lets start!

It is important that students understand each question. Therefore, read each item number and question slowly and distinctly; then read the item number and question a second time. Paraphrase or translate the statements as needed to ensure student comprehension.

A survey of the student's parents feelings about their child's writing is also encouraged at this time. The sample survey can be translated or read to parents where necessary. (See parent survey entitled *What I Think About My Child's Writing*.) We recommend attaching a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey and the importance of a parent response for continued communication about their child's learning.

Part 2: Day Two Instructions

Use the following script to instruct students on their first day's writing task.

Today you are going to write about things that happened to you during your first day here at school. Before you begin writing we are going to brainstorm together to help everyone remember what happened on that day. Let's start by reading from this list. (Paraphrase if needed to ensure comprehension).

Make a transparency of the following list (font lettering size of 25 to 30 recommended) and place it on an overhead projector.

MY FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL

- I liked the person sitting next to me.
- I thought my teacher was nice.
- I got to meet a new friend.
- I got to see my old friends.
- I joined a club.
- I was late for school.
- I missed my family.
- I got a book I really liked.
- I lost something.
- I found something.
- My desk was too small (big).
- I was shy.
- Others?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Read the list aloud with the class (Translate list if needed). Allow time for discussion after each "first day's" experience. Possible questions to prompt student thinking which can be asked in English or the student's first language are:

Did anyone have this experience?

How many remember having this happen to you?

Tell the students: *Circle this experience, if it happened to you.*

After going through each item on the list, ask the students if they had other experiences that were not listed and that they would like to share with the whole group. As the students share their experiences, write them on the transparency or chalk/ink board. Give the students an additional ten minutes to write any other experiences that happened that might have not been listed on the board or on the transparency. This activity is designed to allow time for those students who may not feel comfortable sharing their experience in front of other students (e.g., may feel shy speaking in class, may not feel proficient in English; and/or may be embarrassed about their experience.)

Part 3: Day Two Instructions

Next, explain to the students, *Now that you have had time to brainstorm and think about the experiences that you had on your first day at school, it is time to put those thoughts in writing. Pretend that you are writing a letter to a friend or relative about your first day at school. Pick two items you circled or listed to help you write your letter. In your writing:*

- *Start the letter with 'Dear Friend" or "Dear Relative". If you have a particular friend or relative in mind, you can write their name instead. Start the first paragraph with "Let me tell you about my first day at school."*

- Take one item at a time and write a paragraph about that experience.

- *Be sure to describe why you feel this way in each paragraph.*

- *Use the example below to help you form your letter.*

```
Dear friend or relative: Let me tell you about my first day at school.
```

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

```
Sincerely,
(Your Name)
```

Give the students a clean piece of lined paper to write their letter. Let the students know that they should focus on getting their ideas down on writing and not worry about punctuation, grammar, or spelling. On day two they will have time to review and edit their writing. After the students have completed their first draft, collect the papers and make sure the student's name is on each paper.

Part 4: Day Three Instructions

Return the papers to the students and tell them to review their letters. Let them know that they should use the following instructions. Read the following instructions aloud and discuss each item to ensure that all students understand their task. Translate the instructions if necessary. This list should be duplicated or posted so all students can refer back to it while they rewrite their letters.

Directions for Completing the Letter

1. Read your letter.
2. Did you clearly express what you wanted to say?
3. Make any changes that will improve your letter.
4. Be sure to:

   - Write about two experiences
   - Use complete sentences
   - Check your spelling
   - Use correct capital letters and punctuation

Students should be encouraged to use any classroom references to complete their letter including: dictionaries, alphabet lists, brainstorm lists, word boxes, etc.

After students have rewritten their letters, have them write the date, their name, the teacher's and school's name at the top of the paper. Collect both the first draft and finished paper and staple together.

Scoring and Interpreting The Writing Sample

To score a writing sample, a trained scorer should refer to the *Scoring Guide for Assessing Writing Tasks of ALL Students* (adapted from EAC-West's *Writing Development Continuum for ALL Students*, September, 1995). Students should receive one score (1-7) that most closely meets the criteria described for each rating. A writing sample needs to meet at least 70% of the criteria listed to obtain a given score. The draft paper submitted by the student along with the final paper can be used to assist the rater in determining an appropriate score. The results of the rating can be placed in the *Sample Individual Student Writing Profile*. Sample writings of the student's work at each rating level should be collected and used as part of the scoring process to ensure rater reliability.

In addition to the teacher's rating of the student's writing, the rating from Item #1 in the student's self-reflection and the parent's judgement of their child's writing should be included on the *Sample Individual Student Writing Profile*.

The *Sample Individual Student Writing Profile* includes space to record four assessment periods. If more assessment dates are desired we recommend expanding this form. If fewer assessment periods are needed, we suggest reducing the form. Ideas for creating a single score from these multiple assessments are provided in the next section.

Individual Student Writing Profile Sample

Student Name _____ Grade _____ Teacher_____

Assessment Date				
Content Area				
Writing Task Title				

Teacher's Rating of Student's Writing (1-7)				
Student's Reflection on Writing (1-4)				
Parent's Rating of Child's Writing (1-4)				
Optional: # of writing pieces completed				

Date	Aspects of Writing Accomplished and/or Needing Further Development (Use back of sheet if more space is needed)

Scoring Guide for Assessing Writing Tasks of ALL Students

Level	Growth Phases	Evidence
7	Mastering	Writes clearly for a variety of audiences and purposes. Correctly uses the convention of writing. Ideas and content are clear and focused. Sentences are well constructed with consistently strong and varied structure. The structure of the paper is well organized (e.g., appropriate details, smooth transitions). Learner demonstrates voice by speaking directly to the reader in an expressive and engaging manner.
6	Building	Writes well in a few genres (content-specific) with a clear sense of the audience. Uses rich vocabulary and understands how to use writing conventions and organization, although a few systematic errors may occur. Ideas and content are mostly clear and focused, but organization of text or genres may reflect cultural nuances (e.g., difficulty moving from general to specific points, transitions sometimes inappropriate). Voice may emerge strongly and consistently in some genres more than others
5	Discovering	Can write in a limited context. Can plan, organize and polish writing. Continues to

		refine use of writing conventions and organization. Learner displays ability to write to an audience and with purpose. Continues to grapple with invented spelling and conventional English orthography. English learner may include first language terms or phrases to express a particular concept, idea, or word. Writing includes simple sequencing and irregular word patterns. Nonstandard English, organization, and syntax are common. Message is limited, but clear. Supporting ideas skimpy or vague. Conventions of writing are used in a less random manner, but systematic errors continue. Voice is used with consistency in particular genres of writing.
4	Exploring	Writes own messages or stories using invented spelling. Attempts to use standard writing conventions (e.g., grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spacing, paragraphing) and has a sense of organization. Learner understand the purpose of the writing task, but continues to struggle with structuring the message in a coherent form to express ideas and content. For English learners, the intonation patterns and pauses of their first language may be reflected in their writing. The student also begins to transfer from invented spelling to conventional spelling. Voice continues to emerge in particular writing.
3	Rising	Begins using English alphabet and invented spelling. Although ocassionally intersperses English alphabet with scribble to communicate messages especially when writing "lengthy" notes, songs, or stories. Learner displays an understanding of the purpose of the writing task, although may not be able to clearly structure the message in a coherent form. Writing may reflect learner's first language with near equivalent symbols or sounds. Voice beginning to emerge in some phrases more than others.
2	Forming	Understands purpose of and can recognize letters and words. Is starting to write recognizable letters or words, but clearly does not have full comprehension of the form and structure of writing task. Mixes scribbles with English alphabet and/or nonRoman letters to form words and phrases. Learner may use varied English and nonRoman alphabets &/or scripts in writing.
1	Emerging	Understands that writing is a form of communication and attempts to communicate in some form of writing, but clearly does not have full comprehension of form or structure. Learner distinguishes pictures from texts, but texts do not necessarily represent the names of objects drawn. Scribbling horizontally (left to right) may be demonstrated as well as nonhorizontal forms of scribble (e.g., Arabic, Chinese, Korean).

What I Think About My Writing

Date _____ Student _____ Teacher _____

1. How do you feel as a writer?

     4= Excellent _____
     3= Good _____

2= Fair _____
1= Poor _____

2. What has been the hardest part of writing this quarter?

3. What has been the easiest part of writing this quarter?

4. What is your best piece of writing this quarter? Why is this your best piece?

OPTIONAL (FOR USE ONLY WHEN STUDENTS KEEP LOGS AND/OR PORTFOLIOS)

5. How many writing pieces did you complete this quarter? _____

What I Think About My Child's Writing

Name of Child _____ Grade _____ Year _____ Quarter: 1 2 3 4

Name of Parent/Guardian _____ School _____

1. How would you rate your child's writing this quarter? **(CHECK ONE)**

    4= Excellent _____
    3= Good _____
    2= Fair _____
    1= Poor _____

2. What do you feel your child learned most about writing this quarter?

3. What was the best piece of writing your child brought home? Why did you pick this piece?

3. With what areas do you feel your child needs more help in writing?

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